

The Islamic Review

Edited by AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

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RAJAB, 1347 A.H.
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OMAR HUBERT RANKIN,
WELLINGTON.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
 مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلِیْهِ عَلَیْهِ السَّلَامُ

THE
 ISLAMIC REVIEW

RAJAB, 1347 A.H.

Vol. XVII.

JANUARY, 1929 A.C.

No. 1

NOTES

A New Year Tonic.¹

می شود از جبر پیدا اختیار	در اطاعت کوش اے غفلت شعا
آتش از باشد ز طغیان خس شود	ناکس از فراں پذیری کس شود
خویش را زنجیری آئین کند	هر که تسخیر مه و پرویں کند
قید بو را نافه آہو کند	باد را زندان گل خوشبو کند
پیش آئینے سر تسلیم خم	می زند اختر سوے منزل قدم
بر جہد اندر گے او خون او	لالہ پیہم سوختن قانون او
ذره ما صحراست از آئین وصل	قطرہ دیر یاست از آئین وصل
تو چرا نافل ز ایں سماں روی	باطن ہر شے ز آئینے قوی
زینت پاکن ہماں زنجیر سیم	باز اے آزاد دستور قدیم
از حدود مصطفیٰ بیرون مرو	شکوہ سنج سختی آئین مشو

TRANSLATION.

Seek ever to obey (the Qur-án and the Hadith), O heedless one!

[¹ The verses are taken from the Asrār-i-Khudī of Iqbāl, pp. 66-67.

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For Liberty is the fruit of obedience.
 By obedience the fire of worth is kindled in the unworthy.
 By disobedience it dies down to ashes.
 He that would master the sun and the stars,
 Let him first submit himself to law.
 The wind is enthralled by the fragrant rose,
 Imprisonment makes smell a rare perfume in the navel of
 the muskdeer,
 The star moves towards its goal
 With head bowed—all in obedience to the law.
 To burn unceasingly is the law of the tulip
 And so the blood leaps in its veins.
 Drops of water become ocean
 And grains of sand a Sahara in obedience to law of union.
 Wherefore, since law makes all things strong within,
 Why dost thou neglect this thy one source of strength?
 O thou that art emancipated from the old order,
 Spare not to deck thy feet once more with the same fine silver
 chains,
 Neither rail at all against the law of the Qur-án,
 Nor walk outside the statutes of Muhammad.

Havelock Ellis on the Bible.

A few months ago, a novel entitled *The Well of Loneliness*, by Miss Radcliffe Hall, published by a London firm, was withdrawn from publication because the Editor of the *Sunday Express* had denounced it as a book so immoral that he would prefer to administer prussic acid to his daughter rather than place a copy of the novel in her hands. Of course things did not stop here. The book soon afterwards was published in France and thence imported back into England. The Customs authorities who had detained the parcels containing the copies of the novel found it innocuous, it is true, but owing to pressure, the matter was referred to the Chief Magistrate at Bow Street Police Court, who decided that the book must be, for all its merits, classed as an obscene publication. This adverse decision of Sir Charles Biron drew very strong protests from many critics of note; for is it not a fact that the obscenity

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of to-day is the propriety of to-morrow? Of all those writers who took pen in hand to criticize the magistrate's ruling, Mr. Havelock Ellis, whose spirited article entitled "Obscenity and the Censor" (which appeared in the *Saturday Review* for November 17, 1928), is perhaps the most interesting. For this article starts a train of thought which affords a very good field for appraising the real moral value of the Bible. Havelock Ellis writes:—

"It is indeed well known that the Bible takes a high place among 'obscene' books. There appears to be no definition of obscenity which will not condemn the Bible. However, on the practical side, it is also known that the young find their source of information concerning sex—birth, masturbation, birth-control, rape, and perversion—from the Bible. This was, for instance, shown not long ago through a careful inquiry by a distinguished authority in social hygiene, Dr. Katharine Davis, among over a thousand unmarried women, all college graduates."

This indictment, as its perusal will have shown, is strong, and becomes all the stronger when it is remembered that it is written concerning a book that is still, by the orthodox, regarded as infallible. But let us now, by way of comparison, cast a glance at the pages of the Holy Qur-án which contains directions for the physical, as well as the moral and spiritual, welfare of man, and deals with the most delicate questions in language unapproached for purity in respect of such questions in any other law. It is one of the miracles of the Holy Qur-án that, while it was produced in the language of a people whose poets took pride in describing the relations of the sexes in the most indecent words and phrases, the language of the Qur-án is rigidly pure. Anyone who doubts this statement need only spend a little time in comparing the Biblical treatment of subjects generally described as "delicate" with that to be found in the Qur-an.

"A New Commentary on Holy Scripture."

The echoes of the criticism of *The Well of Loneliness*, which carried with it certain scathing remarks on the Bible, had

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scarcely died away when another book, entitled *A New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, was issued by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The book contains contributions from fifty well-known authorities on their several subjects.

Although the *Daily Mail*, in its issue of November 30, 1928, professes to regard the book as "an event" and thinks that it "can do nothing but good by showing how strong is the evidence for the essential truths of Scripture," and although the *Sunday Times*, too, of December 2nd, characterizes it as "a useful and important book," it should not be forgotten that it contains nothing new. Its chief merit, in our opinion, lies in the fact that it assembles in book-form all those stray facts with which all intelligent Christians—by which we understand all those Christians who have long forsaken dogmatized, priest-ridden Christianity—are too familiar; and we are sure that it will certainly prove as good and potent an influence in driving yet another nail into the coffin of Christianity. For it will certainly dismay thousands of Church people, both young and old, who have always believed their Bible to be true and inspired from cover to cover.

As to Lot's wife, the book declares that—

"Our Lord's references to events in the Old Testament record, for example, his references to the Flood and to Lot's wife, cannot be pressed as requiring of us a belief that these stories are historical descriptions of actual occurrences."

Hence both the Flood and the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt go by the board. Genesis is declared to a large extent legendary in character, while Balaam's ass is said to be on a par with certain ridiculous stories told in the *Iliad*. Further, such long-accepted Bible narratives as that of Jonah and the great fish, Noah's ark and Belshazzar's feast are dismissed as mythical.

On the story of Jonah the editor-in-chief, Dr. Gore, observes that there is reason to suppose that Matthew, chap. xii, verse 40, in which Christ is related to have said: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly,

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so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," is "a somewhat misleading gloss, and not a word of Christ."

In fact, the book makes short work of the Old Testament at once when it says that "Exaggeration is a Semitic habit."

As to the New Testament, it is understandable that the collaborators of Dr. Gore are a little cautious, yet here and there the cat continues to emerge from the bag. For instance, it is asserted that, "in the raising of Jairus's daughter, we should naturally conclude that what was taken by those who sent the message to be death, our Lord knew to be not death but coma." As to the destruction of the Gadarene swine, we are told that "it is a difficulty. That the herd was seized with a common instinct of terror and perished in consequence seems certain. It is another illustration of our changed attitude to the infallibility of the Bible record that we should like to think Mark is in error in connecting their destruction with anything said or willed by our Lord."

Now verdicts of this nature are sure to shatter the long-cherished conceptions of Biblical infallibility, and we do not see how the *Daily Mail* can at all justify itself in asserting that "it may confidently be said that there is nothing to shake faith or weaken belief if this book is read in the right spirit," and again when it says that the book "can do nothing but good by showing how strong is the evidence for the essential truths of Scripture."

The question obviously arises—What are the essential truths of Scripture?

Now if the present book denies certain of the miracles of which the Gospels are full, then any argument in favour of Jesus' Divinity falls to the ground. For it is in the miracles, more than anywhere, that the argument for his Divinity has its strength. Even the central fact in the Christian religion is a miracle: if Jesus did not rise from the dead, the Christian faith and the preaching of Christianity are, as St. Paul said, in vain; and, be it noted, religious duties, moral teachings, and spiritual awakening do not occupy anything like so important a place as that held by miracles in the Gospel narratives.

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"The book," observes *The Two Worlds* for December 7, 1928, "still clings to many of the legendary stories of the New Testament, which scholarship shows to be as questionable as many of the abandoned records of the Old Testament. In fifty years' time our successors will see the same attitude to much of the New Testament lore as the commentators (in the new book) take towards the Old Testament." We do not think that our contemporary will prove very far out in its prophecy; and, for ourselves, we accord Dr. Gore's volume a most cordial welcome.

Modernism in Christianity and the Importance of Islamic Centres.

Given below is an excerpt from the text of a lecture entitled "Modernism," by Dr. W. Walsh, leader of the Free Religious Movement, Lindsey Hall, London, W. We find it interesting, inasmuch as it gives us an idea of the transformation which the religious belief of the West has recently undergone and, by way of corollary, we come to understand the importance of organizing our Islamic centres more and more actively in the great cities of Europe. A perusal of the extract will also show that the spade-work, first initiated by Muhammad, against Christian orthodoxy is practically complete, and what is more, that it is being completed by Christians.

The excerpt reads:—

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the virgin birth of Jesus.

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the physical resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the penal character of the sufferings of Jesus and that on the cross he offered a propitiation or satisfaction to God.

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the omniscience and omnipotence of Jesus.

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the trustworthy character of Bible apocalyptic pictures, portraying the end of the world.

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Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the fleshy resurrection of human beings.

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, apostolic authority for the monarchical episcopate [bishops].

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, the evidential value of miracles, and that they are capable of attesting a divine revelation.

Modernism denies, while orthodoxy accepts, Biblical and ecclesiastical infallibility.

From the above it will be seen that the Virgin Birth, which is the foundation-stone of the Christian theological labyrinth, which manifests itself now in the Doctrine of the Atonement and now in the doctrine of Divinity, is being discarded by all intelligent Christians. Let us, therefore, strike while the iron is hot.

British Muslim Society, London.

The Society have had a most successful month, both as regards attendance and lectures, during November 1928, the Rt. Hon. Lord Headley, the President, being able to preside at all the meetings. One of the outstanding lectures to which members and non-members alike had the pleasure of listening was that of Sirdar Ikbāl 'Alī Shāh, the well-known journalist and authority on Eastern affairs. His lecture entitled "The Truth about the Moslem Modernization" (which was delivered on November 18, 1928) proved a great draw. The London Muslim Prayer House, which is controlled and entirely supported by the Woking Muslim Mission and is the scene of the Society's weekly lectures, was packed with an audience representing practically every nationality. The lecturer began by pointing out that his subject was in the nature of glad tidings to those who had drunk deep at the fountain of Press misrepresentation in the West as to Eastern affairs, and an antidote to the poison of disappointment which had been caused in the minds of such Muslims as had not had the opportunity of seeing for themselves the state of affairs in the present-day Muslim world. For the cleavage and disruption of which the English Press in particular has of late seemed to make so

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much, existed not at all in the Muslim world. The Sirdar Sahib incidentally referred to one of the heartrending defects of Eastern journalism, namely, the fact that Eastern newspapers copied *in toto* all that was reported in the Western journals, even as to matters solely concerning the East, without even troubling to sift the evidence for themselves. The Easterners—and he emphasized this point very strongly—should not rely on Western news-agencies whose sole aim it would appear to be to broadcast malicious gossip for the purpose of sowing discord among Muslim countries. This he illustrated by quoting a few instances showing how certain events had been manipulated and garbled and fictitious stories and pictures invented.

If modernization meant Europeanization, and if Europeanization brought in its train industrialization, then he was of opinion that Muslims could be modernized without ceasing to be Muslims. But if, on the other hand, poverty was synonymous with savagery, and a poor man was not to be regarded as civilized, then he wondered if such modernization was worth having at all. The Sirdar Sahib, in the course of his extensive travels which covered upwards of 40,000 miles, found that Muslims understood their religion better than ever before.

After the lecture a heated discussion ensued, in which a number of friends took part; Mr. Omar Rankin, son of Sir Reginald Rankin, Bart., who accepted Islam in 1927, Mr. Aftāb Ikbāl, M.A., and Professor H. M. Léon expressing their views on the subject.

The lecture was followed by the annual meeting of the Society, when the Secretary, Mr. H. Lovegrove, submitted the balance-sheet for the year 1927-1928, and pointed out that there was a slight deficit, which was, however, counterbalanced by a larger membership. The Society had made good headway, and new members were enrolling daily. The Society had its members all the world over and was very anxious to increase their number.

The following office-bearers were elected for the year 1928-1929: Lord Headley, President; Professor Hārūn M. Léon and Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal 'ud-Dīn, Vice-Presidents;

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Mr. H. Lovegrove, Secretary; Mr. M. Yosrī (of Cairo), Joint Secretary; and five members of the working committee, to wit: Mr. 'Abdu 'l-Majid, M.A., Imām of the Mosque, Woking; Mr. Togo Tzushima (who would act as Treasurer); Mr. T. Ahmad; Mr. Zamān Shāh; and Mademoiselle Fakhrī Loutfi.

The Society is, it is gratifying to note, becoming more and more popular, and at the celebration of the Birthday of the Prophet there was a record attendance, many of the visitors being Englishmen of note who have become interested in Islam through the efforts of the Society.

The members attend all functions where Islam is discussed. Very recently, at a lecture by Professor Margoliouth on "The Koran" before the Near and Middle East Society of London, four members of the British Muslim Society were present. Thus they avail themselves of every opportunity for dispelling the wrong notions on Islam which are rampant in the British Isles. The Secretary, who is the author of a book entitled *What is Islam?* (published by the Trust for the Encouragement of Muslim Religious Literature, the Mosque, Woking), has distributed a few dozen copies of his book gratis, and the result is that he is constantly receiving inquiries and requests for more literature. This involves expense which, as can well be imagined, is becoming very heavy. But if friends abroad and at home give the Society a helping hand in this labour of love, much can be achieved.

The greatest need of the Society is to raise sufficient funds to enable it to advertise its lectures in the various English weekly and monthly periodicals.

Finally, mention must also be made of the valuable help, financial and otherwise, which the Society has always received from the Afghan Legation in London.

Lord Headley is working hard to obtain a site for the London Nizāmiyyah Mosque. Land in London is very expensive, and we should all like to see his ideals realized. He has laboured abundantly and has given an enormous amount of time and care to this work. May he live long, and may peace and blessings be with him and his efforts.

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A WORD TO MY MUSLIM BRETHREN THE GREAT GOSPEL

“Man shall have nought but whatever he has striven for.”

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

THE Holy Qur-án epitomizes in this beautiful expression the great Gospel. Though apparently in the form of a warning, it is, nevertheless, pregnant with the happiest of tidings to mankind. It brings us the Divine assurance that our exertions shall in nowise come to nought; nay, they shall be rewarded plentifully. The abundant blessings of God are there round about us; we have but to stretch our hand to make them our own. The rich treasures of heaven which contribute so immensely to our well-being and happiness await just a move on our part to unfold.

Could there be a happier message to mankind than that contained in those few words? They lay all our doubts and fears as to the fructification of our toils and labours at rest. What Divine arrangement has assigned us to is no more than honest exertion. As to the fruit, we are told we need have no anxiety. It will of itself come to us. Nor do we stand in any need of capital. Whatever capital is needed to start with has already been bestowed upon all alike as a free gift from the Lord. Our hands and feet, our various faculties, are the only capital needed. The material for these powers to work upon has also been provided in great abundance. We have not to look up to others for anything needful. What a spirit of independence is inculcated in the expression! For the achievement of our ends, we have not to depend upon another's sweet will, intercession, recommendation, and so forth. We have been taught thorough self-reliance. Our effort, even though no more than just a mustard seed, shall have its due reward. Thus man has been

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liberated from abject dependence on others' favours and a spirit of self-reliance and self-respect fostered in him.

No great achievement is possible without self-reliance. The great men of history—men that made a mark in their particular line—owed their success, in a large measure, to the quality of self-reliance. Wealth, power, and other such-like means necessary for a certain undertaking, are futile unless supplemented by the firm sense of self-reliance. Thus in infusing into man this spirit of absolute independence, and cultivating in him an unshakable conviction of his own powers, the Holy Qur-án has furnished him with an equipment, without which no success is possible.

In this connection I have a word to say to my Muslim brethren. Have you ever cared to take these Qur-ánic truths to heart? You claim to have faith in the Word of God, but have you ever thought it worth your while to make its teachings your guiding principles in daily life? You say, Allah is *Rahman* and *Rahim*, but do you realize the significance of these Divine attributes? As amply discussed in these pages, is it possible that a Muslim, whom God has fully equipped for this struggle of life, should get pushed to the wall? Islam and degradation cannot go together. If you are true Muslims—Muslims not only in word but also in deed—you can come to no humiliation. “Do not be depressed, nor be aggrieved,” says the Book of God, “for surely you are the highest of all, provided you are true believers.”

Jesus prayed for the Kingdom of Heaven; but the Holy Qur-án gave its charter to mankind. This kingdom was established on earth for some three decades, at the very inception of Islam. But soon thereafter, its principles gave way to human self-assertiveness. Hu'aviya was the first to violate the basic principle of such a kingdom—the nomination of the Khalifa by general election. The form of

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government presented in the Holy Qur-án, for which Jesus prayed, is the best kind of republican government. Such a government must partake of the above-mentioned characteristics of the Kingdom of God on earth. In the Divine Kingdom there is no distinction between man and man, so far as the distribution of blessings is concerned. There is no colour bar, no creed bar, no nation bar, no race bar, in the even-handed ministration of Heaven.

Let Muslims rise this very day and take firmly to the Gospel of Action. No matter if they have no wealth, no means. They possess, what in fact is the only thing needed—the Power of Action. Let them make the best use of their faculties—their hands and feet, their eyes and ears, their heads and their hearts. “The earth of the Lord is extensive enough,” says the Holy Qur-án. Let them make a way for themselves. I do not refer to the sort of *Hijrat* (emigration) undertaken a few years ago by the Muslims of India. Such a *Hijrat* only betrays ignorance of the real significance of the act. Would that they were possessed of the spirit underlying *Hijrat*—in fact its very essence! It is a key to all success. Not only does our Muslim era, but the very power and glory of Islam, dates from *Hijrat*. This requires treatment in a separate volume. Suffice to point out here that whether you stay at home or go abroad, wherever you are, you must have your Power of Action by you. Leaving it behind, no amount of *Hijrat* will avail you in any land. This is a capital to which no earthly pelf can stand any comparison. You might roam over vast territories, but if you do not possess this, you will fare no better. Look at trees! Plant different species of them in the same place. Each one will find the nourishment that suits its particular needs from the same environment. All it must possess is the power of absorption. The moment this power

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is weakened, no change of environment will do it any good. No doubt, change is sometimes necessary ; for instance, when the soil is marshy or otherwise unfit. But the fact remains none the less that no other soil will be of any use, unless the power of absorption is there, within the plant itself. What is true of plant life is equally true of human life. If a man does not possess the power of action, mere change of place will avail him little. Even in the life to come, we shall be what we are in this. Whatever our actual state in this life, the same will continue in the hereafter. "Who is blind," says the Holy Qur-án, "in this life, will also be blind in the life to come." Mere change of place, even though it were from earth to heaven, can bring about no change in ourselves. Let us, therefore, strive to cultivate high morals, develop a truly Muslim character ; in a word, foster the power of action in ourselves. Before long, whatever we have lost will of itself come to us. We shall require no assistance, no support from others. We must learn to stand on our own legs, without reclining on others, no matter if our progress be very slow in the beginning. It may take decades to walk, but walk we must on our own legs. Calamities and misfortunes only come to give us a character. "And give good news," says the Holy Qur-án, "to the patient ones, who, when a calamity befalls them say : Surely from God we are and unto God we go back."

Heed not whatever misfortunes and difficulties beset your way. They are meant to give you a moral tone. "The day of *ibtíla* (calamity) is the day of purification," says a report from the Prophet. *Ibtíla* means putting gold into a crucible in order to purify it of dross. Calamities likewise come as blessings in disguise, to purge us of our blemishes. Let them, therefore, not stand in our way. They should rather serve as a spur to our Power of Action.

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Whatever is indispensable as an equipment, each one of you has been endowed with in the fullest measure. Among you are Avicennas, Tanqs, Muhammad-the-Conquerors, even to-day, but in a potential form. What made them great can make you great. It was the Qur-ánic rule of conduct—Man shall have nought but whatever he has striven for—that brought out their latent greatness ; it is the same, and nothing but the same, that can to-day bring out your dormant powers to full fruition. Your glory lies in this Qur-ánic teaching—in the GOSPEL OF ACTION.

MUHAMMAD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

By PROFESSOR 'ABDU 'L-AHAD DÁWÚD, B.D.

VII

KING DAVID CALLS HIM: "MY LORD"

[The learned Professor is open to correspondence on the questions discussed and points raised in this article. Readers can write to him care of the Editor, the *Islamic Review*, Woking.—ED. I.R.]

THE history of David, his exploits and prophetic writings, are found in two books of the Old Testament, Samuel and the Psalms. He was the youngest son of Yishai (Jessie) from the tribe of Judah. While still a young shepherd, he had killed a bear and torn into halves a lion. The valiant young man swung a small stone right through the forehead of Goliath, an armed Philistine champion and saved the army of Israel. The highest reward for a successful feat displaying valour was the hand of Michal, a daughter of King Saul. David played on harp and flute, and was a good singer. His flight from his jealous father-in-law, his adventures and exploits as a bandit, are well known. On the death of Saul, David was invited by the people to assume the reins of the kingdom, for which he had long before been anointed by the Prophet Samuel.

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He reigned for some seven years at Hebron. He took Jerusalem from the Jebusites and made it the capital of his kingdom. Its two hills, or mounts, were named "Moriah" and "Sion." Both these words have the same signification and import as the famous "Marwa" and "Sapha" at Mecca, which words respectively mean "the place of the vision of the Lord," and "the rock" or "stone." David's wars, his very grave family troubles, his sin against the faithful soldier, Uriah, and his wife, Bathsheba, was not left with impunity. He reigned forty years; his life was marked with wars and family griefs. There are some contradictory accounts about him which are evidently to be ascribed to the two opposite sources.

The crime of David in connection with Uriah and his wife (2 Sam. xi.) is not even alluded to in the Qur-án (Sura xxxviii.). It is one of the superiorities of the Holy Qur-án that it teaches us that all prophets are born sinless and die sinless. It does not, like the Bible, impute to them crimes and sins—e.g. the double crime of David, mentioned in the Bible, which, according to the Law of Moses, is punishable by death—which, let alone a prophet who is a chosen servant of God the Almighty, we would not even think of attaching to the name of an ordinary human being.

The story of David committing adultery and two angels having come to him thus to remind him of the sin is a puerile falsehood—wherever it may be found. It has been repudiated by the best Muslim opinion. Rāzī says: "Most of the learned, and those who have searched for the truth among them, declare this charge false and condemn it as a lie and a mischievous story. The words *istaghfora* and *ghafarana* occurring in the text of verse 24, chap. xxxviii. of the Holy Qur-án by no means indicate that David had committed a sin, for *istighfār* really signifies the seeking of protection; and David sought Divine protection when he saw that his enemies had grown so bold against him; and by *ghafarana* is meant the rectification of his affairs; for David, who was a great ruler, could not succeed in keeping his enemies under complete control

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The Old Testament does not mention the time when the gift of prophecy was granted to David. We read that after David had committed the two sins it was Nathan the Prophet who was sent by God to chastise David. Indeed, until late in his life we find him always having recourse to other prophets. According to the Biblical accounts, therefore, it would seem that the gift of prophecy came to him after he had thoroughly repented of his sin.

In one of the previous articles I remarked that after the split of the Kingdom into two independent States, which were often at war with each other, the ten tribes which formed the Kingdom of Israel were always hostile to the dynasty of David and never accepted any other portion of the Old Testament except the Torah—or the Law of Moses as contained in the Pentateuch. This is evident from the Samaritan version of the first five books of the Old Testament. We do not meet with a single word or prophecy about David's posterity in the discourses of the great prophets, like Elijah, Elisha, and others, who flourished in Samaria during the reigns of the wicked kings of Israel. It is only after the fall of the Kingdom of Israel and the transportation of the ten tribes into Assyria that the Prophets of Judeah began to predict the advent of some Prince from the House of David who was soon to restore the whole nation and subdue its enemies. There are several of these obscure and ambiguous sayings in the writings or discourses of these later prophets which have given a rapturous and exotic exultation to the Fathers of the Church; but in reality they have nothing to do with Jesus Christ. I shall briefly quote two of these prophecies. The first is in Isaiah (chap. vii., verse 14), where that Prophet predicts that "a damsel already pregnant with child shall bear forth a son, and thou shalt name him Emmanuel." The Hebrew word *a'lmāh* does not mean "virgin," as generally interpreted by the Christian theologians and therefore applied to the Virgin Mary, but it signifies "a marriageable woman, maiden, damsel." The Hebrew word for "virgin" is *bṯulāh*. Then the child's name is to be Emmanuel, which means "God-is-with-us." There are hundreds of Hebrew

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names which are composed of "el" and another noun, which forms either the first or the last syllable of such compound nouns. Neither Isaiah, nor King Ahaz, nor any Jew, ever thought that the newly born infant would be himself "God-with-us." They never thought anything else but that his name only would be as such. But the text expressly says that it was Ahaz (who seems to have known the maiden with child), that would give the boy that name. Ahaz was in danger, his enemies were pressing hard against Jerusalem, and this promise was made to him by showing him a *sign*, namely, a pregnant maiden, and not a Virgin Mary, that would come into the world more than seven hundred years later! This simple prediction of a child that would be born during the reign of Ahaz was equally misunderstood by the writer of the Gospel of Matthew (Matt. i. 23). The name "Jesus" was given by the Angel Gabriel (Matt. i. 21), and he was never called "Emmanuel." Is it not scandalous to take this name as an argument and proof of the Christian doctrine of the "Incarnation"?

The other strange interpretation of a prophetic prediction is from Zachariah (ix. 9), which is misquoted and utterly misunderstood by the writer of the first Gospel (xxi. 5). The Prophet Zachariah says: "Rejoice much, O daughter of Sion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King is coming unto thee; righteous and with salvation is he; meek and mounted upon an ass; and upon a colt, son of a she-ass." In this poetical passage the poet simply wishes to describe the male ass—upon which the King is seated—by saying that it was a young ass, and this colt, too, is described as the son of a female ass. It was only one male colt or young donkey. Now Matthew quotes this passage in the following way:—

"Tell the daughter of Sion,
Behold, thy King is coming unto thee;
Meek, and mounted on a female ass,
And on a colt, the son of a female ass."

Whether or not the person who wrote the above verse did really believe that Jesus, when making his triumphal entry

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into Jerusalem by mounting or sitting at the same time both upon the mother ass and her young colt, worked a miracle is not the question; nevertheless it is true to say that the majority of the Christian Fathers so believed; and it never occurred to them that such a show would look rather a comedy than a royal and pompous procession. Luke, however, is careful, and has not fallen into Matthew's mistake. Were these authors both inspired by the same Spirit?

Zachariah foretells in Jerusalem, after the return of the Jews from captivity, the coming of a king. Though meek and humble, mounted upon a colt of an ass, still he is coming with salvation and would rebuild the House of God. He prophesies this at a time when the Jews are endeavouring to rebuild the Temple and the ruined town; their neighbouring peoples are against them; the work of building is stopped until Darius, King of Persia, issues a firman for the construction. Although no Jewish king had ever appeared since the sixth century before Christ, nevertheless they had had autonomous governments under foreign sovereigns. The salvation here promised, be it noted, is *material* and *immediate*, and *not* a salvation to come five hundred and twenty years afterwards, when Jesus of Nazareth would ride upon two asses simultaneously and enter into Jerusalem, already a large and wealthy city with a magnificent temple, simply to be captured and crucified by the Jews themselves and by their Roman masters, as the present Gospels tell us! This would be no solace at all for the poor Jews surrounded with enemies in a ruined city. Consequently, by the word "king" we may understand one of their chief leaders—Zerobabel, Ezra, or Nehemiah.

These two examples are intended to show chiefly to my Muslim readers—who may not be well acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures—how the Christians have been misguided by their priests and monks in giving stupid interpretations and meanings to the prophecies contained therein.

Now I come to David's prophecy:—

"YaHWaH said to my ADON,
Sit at my right until I place
Thine enemies a footstool under thy feet."

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This verse of David is written in Psalm cxi. and quoted by Matthew (xxii. 44), Mark (xii. 36), and Luke (xx. 42). In all languages the two names contained in the first distich are rendered as "The Lord said unto my Lord." Of course, if the first Lord is God, the second Lord is also God; nothing more convenient to and suitable an argument for a Christian priest or pastor than this, namely, the speaker is God, and also the spoken to is God; therefore David knows two Gods! Nothing more logical than this reasoning! Which of these two *Domini* is "the Lord" of David? Had David written, "*Dominus meus dixit Domino meo*," he would have made himself ridiculous, for then he would have admitted himself to be a slave or servant of two Lords, without even mentioning their proper names. The admission would go even farther than the existence of two Lords; it would mean that David's second Lord had taken refuge with his first Lord, who ordered him to take a seat on his right side until he should put his enemies a footstool under his feet. This reasoning leads us to admit that, in order to understand well your religion, you are obliged to know your Bible or Qur-án in the original language in which it was written, and not to depend and rely upon a translation.

I have purposely written the original Hebrew words YaHWaH and Adon, in order to avoid any ambiguity and misunderstanding in the sense conveyed by them. Such sacred names written in religious Scripture should be *left* as they are, unless you can find a thoroughly equivalent word for them in the language into which you wish to translate them. The tetragram Yhwh used to be pronounced Yehovah (Jehovah), but now it is generally pronounced Yahwah. It is a proper name of God the Almighty, and it is held so holy by the Jews that when reading their Scriptures they never pronounce it, but read it "Adonī" instead. The other name, "Elohim," is always pronounced, but Yahwah never. Why the Jews make this distinction between these two names of the same God is a question for itself, altogether outside the scope of our present subject. It may, however, in passing, be mentioned that Yahwah, unlike Elohim, is never used with pro-

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nominal suffixes, and seems to be a special name in Hebrew for the Deity as the national God of the people of Israel. In fact, "Elohim" is the oldest name known to all Semites; and in order to give a special character to the conception of the true God, this tetragram is often conjointly with Elohim applied to Him. The Arabic form, *Rabb Allah*, corresponds to the Hebrew form, *Yahwah Elohim*.

The other word, "Ādōn," signifies a "Commander, Lord, and master," or the same as the Arabic and Turkish nouns *Amīr*, *Sayyid*, and *Aghā*. Ādōn stands as the opposite term of "soldier, slave, and property." Consequently the first part of the distich is to be rendered as "God said to my Lord."

David, in his capacity of a monarch, was himself the Lord and Commander of every Israelite and the Master of the Kingdom. Whose "servant" was he, then? David, being a powerful sovereign, could not be, as a matter of fact, a slave or servant of any living human being whatsoever. Nor is it imaginable that he would call "his Lord" any dead prophet or saint, such as Abraham or Jacob, for whom the usual and reasonable term was "Father." It is equally conceivable that David would not use the appellation "my Lord" for any of his own descendants, for whom, too, the usual term would be "son." There remains, besides God, no other conceivable being who could be David's Lord, except the noblest and the highest man of the race of mankind. It is quite intelligible to think that in the sight and choice of God there must be a man who is the noblest, the most praised, and the most coveted of all men. Surely the Seers and the Prophets of old knew this holy personage and, like David, called him "my Lord."

Of course, the Jewish Rabbins and commentators of the Old Testament understood by this expression the Messiah, who would descend from David himself, and so replied they to the question put to them by Jesus Christ as quoted above from Matthew (xxii.), and the other Synoptics. Jesus flatly repudiated the Jews when he asked them a second question: "How could David call him 'my Lord' if he were his son?" This question of the Master put the audience to silence, for they could find no answer to it. The Evangelists abruptly

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cut short this important subject of discussion. To stop there without a further explanation was not worthy either of the Master or of his reporters. For, leaving the question of his godhead, and even of his prophetical character, aside, Jesus as a teacher was obliged to solve the problem raised by himself when he saw that the disciples and the hearers were unable to know *who* then that "Lord" could be!

By his expression that the "Lord," or the "Adon," could not be a son of David, Jesus excludes himself from that title. This admission is decisive and should awaken the religious teachers of the Christians to reduce Christ to his due status of a high and holy Servant of God, and to renounce the extravagant divine character ascribed to him much to his own disgust and displeasure.

I cannot imagine a teacher who, seeing his pupils unable to answer his question, should keep silent, unless he is himself ignorant like them and unable to give a solution to it. But Jesus was not either ignorant or a malevolent teacher. He was a prophet with a burning love to God and man. He did not leave the problem unsolved or the question without an answer. The Gospels of the Churches do not report the answer of Jesus to the question: "Who was the Lord of David?" But the Gospel of Barnabas does. This Gospel has been rejected by Churches because its language is more in accordance with the revealed Scriptures and because it is very expressive and explicit about the nature of Jesus Christ's mission, and above all because it records the exact words of Jesus concerning Muhammad. A copy of this Gospel can easily be procured. There you will find the answer of Jesus himself, who said that the Covenant between God and Abraham was made on Ishmael, and that "the most glorious or praised" of men is a descendant of Ishmael and not of Isaac through David. Jesus repeatedly is reported to have spoken of Muhammad, whose spirit or soul he had seen in heaven. I shall have, if God wills, an occasion to write on this Gospel later.

There is no doubt that the prophetical eye of Daniel that saw in a wonderful vision the great "Barnasha," who was Muhammad, was also the same prophetical eye of David. It

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was this most glorious and praised of men that was seen by the Prophet Job (xix. 25) as a "Saviour" from the power of the Devil.

Was it, then, Muhammad whom David calls "my Lord" or "my Adon"? Let us see.

The arguments in favour of Muhammad, who is styled "Sayyidu 'l-Mursalin," the same as "Adon of the Prophets," are decisive; they are so evident and explicit in the words of the Old Testament that one is astonished at the ignorance and the obstinacy of those who refuse to understand and obey.

1. The greatest Prophet and Adon, in the eyes of God and man, is not a great conqueror and destroyer of mankind, nor a holy recluse who spends his life in a cave or cell to meditate upon God only to save himself, but one who renders more good and service to mankind by bringing them into the light of the knowledge of the One true God, and by utterly destroying the Power of the Devil and his abominable idols and wicked institutions. It was Muhammad who "bruised the head of the Serpent,"¹ and that is why the Qur-án rightly calls the Devil "Iblis," namely, "the Bruised One"! He purged the Temple of the Ka'aba and all Arabia of the idols, and gave light, religion, happiness, and power to the ignorant Arab idolaters, who in a short time spread that light into the four directions of the earth. In the service of God, the works and the success of Muhammad are incomparable and unrivalled.

The Prophets, Saints, and Martyrs form the army of God against the Power of the Devil; and Muhammad alone is decidedly the Commander-in-Chief of them all. He is, indeed, alone the Adon and Lord not only of David but of all the Prophets, for he has purified Palestine and all the countries visited by Abraham of idolatry and foreign yoke.

2. Since Jesus Christ admits that he himself was not the "Lord" of David, nor that the Messiah was to descend from David, there remains none other than Muhammad among the Prophets to be the Adon or Lord of David. And when we come to compare the praiseworthy religious revolution that

¹ See the *Islamic Review* for October 1926, my article "Why the Qur-án calls the Devil 'Iblis.'"

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the Noble Son of Ishmael brought about in the world, with what all the thousands of prophets put together have achieved, we have to come to the conclusion that it is alone Muhammad who could deserve the meritorious title of Adon.

3. How did David know that "Yahwah said to Adon, 'Sit thou at my right until I put thine enemies a footstool under thy feet'?" and *when* did David hear this word of God? Christ himself gives the answer, namely, "David in spirit wrote this." He saw the Adon Muhammad just as Daniel had seen him (Dan. vii.), and St. Paul had seen him (2 Cor. xii.), and many others had. Of course, this mystery of "Sit thou at my right" is hidden from us. Yet we may safely conjecture that this official investiture with the honour of seating himself at the right of the throne of God, and therefore raised to the dignity of the "Adon," not only of the Prophets but of all the Creatures, took place on the famous night of his Mi'rāj to Paradise.

4. The only principal objection to Muhammad's divine mission and superiority is his condemnation of the doctrine of the Trinity. But the Old Testament knows no other God besides Allah, and the Lord of David did not sit at the right hand of a triple god, but at that of the One Allah. Hence among the Prophets who believed in and served Allah none was so great, and accomplished such a stupendous service for Allah and mankind, as Muhammad, upon whom be peace and blessings.

ISLAM'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN AND ORPHANS

By C. A. SOORMA

(Continued from the December (1928) number, p. 462.)

CHAPTER XVI

CONSENT TO MARRIAGE NECESSARY

(a) "Under the Muhammadan law, according to all the schools, the power of the father to give his children in marriage

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without their consent can be exercised in the case of sons until they have attained their *bulughyet* or puberty, when they are emancipated, so far as their personal rights are concerned, from the *patria potestas*, and are at liberty to contract themselves in marriage. Persons not *sui juris* labour under the same legal disabilities as in other systems of law. They cannot enter into any contract or legal transactions without the consent of their natural guardians. . . . Puberty is presumed on the completion of the fifteenth year, according to most of the schools, unless there is evidence to the contrary. As a general rule, however, a person who completes the fifteenth year is considered, *without distinction of sex*, to be *adult* and *sui juris*, possessed of the capacity to enter into legal transactions", (Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law*, vol. ii. pp. 278-9).

Ameer Ali, quoting the *Hedaya*, says :—

(b) " It is not lawful for a guardian to force an adult virgin into marriage. *None, not even a father, nor the sovereign, can lawfully contract a woman in marriage who is adult and of sound mind, without her permission, whether she be a virgin or not*", (Ameer Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 279).

(c) " Though the right of *Jabr* (i.e. *the right of marrying minors without their consent*) is theoretically an absolute right, there are numerous conditions attached to its exercise. The father, without any difference among the jurists, is prohibited from marrying his child to those who are diseased, to slaves, idiots and other ineligible persons. . . . In fact, the law is particularly attentive to the interests of the child. . . . It takes care that the right of *Jabr* should never be exercised to the prejudice of the infant ; any act of the father which is likely to injure the interests of the minor is considered illegal and entitles the *Qazi* or Judge to interfere in order to prevent the completion of such act, or if complete, to annul it ", (Ameer Ali, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-81).

(d) " Even in the case of a marriage contracted by the father or grandfather as guardian, the presumption that it is for the benefit of the minor is not conclusive, and such a marriage is liable to be set aside in certain cases, where it is plainly undesirable and injurious to the minor. . . . The

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accepted view (of the jurists) seems to be that if the father was not a man of proper judgment and was of reckless character, and married his minor daughter to a man of immoral habits it is liable to be set aside . . ." (Abdur Rahim, *op. cit.*, p. 332).

The above right of *Jabr* is vested in the father or grandfather, and we have seen how qualified and restricted this right is. But where the minor is given in marriage by any relative *other* than the father or grandfather, the law on the subject is as follows :—

(e) "Where a minor is contracted in marriage by any person other than the father or the grandfather, *such minor on attaining puberty has an absolute right to ratify or rescind the contract*. But the minor has an option even in the case of a marriage contracted by a father or grandfather, if the latter was a prodigal or addicted to evil ways or the marriage was *manifestly* to the minor's disadvantage", (Ameer Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 290).

The above right vested in the minor is called the *Option of Puberty*.

CHAPTER XVII

POLYGAMY IN ISLAM

We have seen that polygamy was prevalent among all the nations of antiquity, and is even now unrestricted among the Hindus and the Buddhists. We have also observed the state of Arabia before the advent of Islam—its gross licentiousness and depravity. Let me give you the law of the Qur-án on this subject:—

(a) "And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, *two, three and four, but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course*", (iv. 3).

This is one of the most important verses of the Qur-án.

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I give below the views of several eminent authorities on this subject. To begin with Muhammad Ali:—

- (1) " This passage *permits polygamy under certain circumstances; it does not enjoin it, nor even permit it unconditionally.* . . . It is admitted that this chapter (entitled *An-nisa*, or *Women*) was revealed to guide the Muslims under the conditions which followed the battle of Uhud, and the last portion of the last chapter deals with the battle. Now in that battle seventy men out of seven hundred Muslims had been slain, and this decimation had largely decreased the number of males who, being the bread-winners, were the natural guardians and supporters of the females. The number was likely to suffer a still greater diminution in the battles which had yet to be fought, while the number of women would be increased by the addition of prisoners of war. Thus many orphans would be left in the charge of widows, who would find it difficult to procure the necessary means of support. Hence in the first verse of this chapter the Muslims are enjoined to respect the ties of relationship, inasmuch as they are told that they are all in fact related to each other. In the second verse, the care of orphans is particularly enjoined. In the third verse (quoted above) we are told that if they could not do justice to the orphans they might marry the widows, whose children would thus become their own children, and as the number of women was now much greater than the number of men, they were permitted to marry even two or three or four women. It would thus be clear that the permission to have more than one wife was given under the peculiar circumstances of the Muslim Society then existing, and the Prophet's action in marrying widows, as well as the example of many of his companions, corroborates this statement. Marriage with orphan girls is also sanctioned in this passage, for there were the same difficulties in the

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case of orphan girls as in the case of widows, and the words are general. It may be added here that polygamy in Islam is both in theory and in practice *an exception*, not a rule, and as an exception it is a remedy for many of the evils especially prevalent in European society. It is not only the preponderance of females over males that necessitates polygamy in certain cases, but there is a variety of other circumstances which require polygamy to be adopted under exceptional circumstances, not only for the moral but also for the physical welfare of society. Prostitution, the great evil of civilization, which is a real canker, with its concomitant increase of bastardy, is practically unknown to countries where polygamy is allowed as a remedial measure. . . . By *What your right hands possess* are meant the females who were taken prisoners in war, and such marriages are legalized," as we have noticed above, (Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200).

Taking the above verse in conjunction with the following—

- (b) "*And you have it not in your power to do justice between your wives, even though you may covet (it)*, but be not disinclined (from one) with total disinclination, so that you leave her as it were in suspense; and if you effect a reconciliation and guard (against evil), then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful" (iv. 129)—

the resulting view of the Qur-ân on polygamy is as follows:—

- (i) That marriage with more than one woman is merely *permissive*. (It was sanctioned after the battle of Uhud.)
- (ii) That the number of wives a man can have at the same time is limited to four (*Islam thus restricting polygamy*).
- (iii) That where the husband fears that he cannot do justice to more than one wife, *he must not marry*

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- more than one woman at the same time* (all the above in verse iv. 3).
- (iv) That *it is beyond human power to do justice between all the wives*, although man may cover the desire to do so (clear from verse iv. 129).
 - (v) That in spite of this human failing, one ought to do one's best in treating them impartially.
 - (vi) That it is "more proper that a man have one wife, so that he may not deviate from the right course" (iv. 3), the course of impartiality and equity. Thus we see that Islam *indirectly*, but in unequivocal language, *deprecates polygamy*; and finally—
 - (vii) That it is an *abnormal* law, for abnormal states of society, and though the permission is there, it is not generally availed of, as is clear from Howard, cited below:—
- (a) "Where polygamy exists it is sometimes the chiefs alone who are permitted to have a plurality of wives. Besides, just as in the case of polyandry, almost everywhere it is confined to a very small part of the people, the majority being monogamous. It is so 'among all Mohammedan people, in Asia and Europe, as well as in Africa.' 'Ninety-five per cent. of the Mohammedans of India, for instance, are said to be monogamists,' and in Persia, it is reported, only 'two per cent. of the population enjoy the questionable luxury of a plurality of wives'", (Howard, *History of Matrimonial Institutions*, vol. i. p. 142; and Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law*, vol. ii. pp. 24-5).
 - (b) "He (Mohammed) restrained polygamy by *limiting* the maximum number of contemporaneous marriages and *by making absolute equity towards all obligatory in the man*. It is worthy of note that the clause in the Koran (iv. 3) which contains the permission to contract four contemporaneous marriages is immediately followed by a sentence which cuts down the significance of the preceding passage to its normal

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and legitimate dimensions. The former passage says: ' You may marry two, three or four wives, but no more.' The subsequent lines declare: ' But if you cannot deal equitably and justly with all, *you shall marry only one.*' The extreme importance of this proviso, bearing especially in mind the meaning which is attached to the word *equity* (*adl*) in the Koranic teachings, has not been lost sight of by the great thinkers of the Muslim world ", (Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law*, vol. ii. p. 42).

- (c) " The Muhammadan law undoubtedly contemplates *monogamy as the ideal to be aimed at*, but concedes to a man the right to have more than one wife, not exceeding four, at one and the same time, *provided he is able to deal with them on a footing of equality and justice*. This is in accord with the scheme of Islamic legislation which sets up certain moral ideals to be gradually realized by the community, positively forbidding only such acts as must clearly be injurious to social and individual life at all times ", (Abdur Rahim, *op. cit.*, pp. 327-8).

It is suggested that the above Qur-ānic texts, supplemented by the views of certain well-known authorities, clearly destroy the charge that is so often made by the ignorant that Islam enjoins polygamy or that it sanctions unrestricted polygamy. No religion, in my submission, has achieved the betterment of society with greater success than Islam. Why? Because the laws of Islam are *practical*; they have been framed with a view to meet both the normal and abnormal needs of human society. They are applicable to all states of society, from the purely primitive to the highly civilized. Their very elasticity have been the chief cause of the success of Islam.

Islam also *forbids polyandry*. It never existed in Islamic countries; the prohibition is contained in the following verse (note that the preceding verse, iv. 23, enumerated the class of women forbidden in marriage. This verse is a continuation of such prohibition):—

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“ And all *married* women except those whom your right hands possess; (this is) Allah’s ordinance to you ” . .
(iv. 24).

“ According to the rendering adopted generally, the meaning is that even as it is unlawful for a man to marry a woman within certain degrees of relationship, it is *also unlawful for him to take in marriage one who is already married to another person*. An exception is made, however, regarding *those whom your right hands possess*, by which is meant female captives of war.” The Qur-án legalizes marriage with such women, as we have noticed above, even though they may be *married to non-Muslims* at the time of their capture, provided they become Muslims (Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 207).

CHAPTER XVIII

DIVORCE IN ISLAM

After marriage comes divorce. What is the view of the Qur-án on this burning topic?

(a) “ And if you fear a breach between the two, then appoint a judge from his people and a judge from her people; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware ”, (iv. 35).

This verse apparently refers to the case where the husband has not finally separated from his wife, or *vice versa*. In such a case, the *Qazi* is to appoint arbitrators on both sides to effect a reconciliation. Should the desire for reconciliation be genuine, then Allah would hasten the reunion. On the other hand, if the differences are irreconcilable, then a divorce may be pronounced by the *Qazi* against the party at fault.

It is clear from this verse that the Qur-án considers it more salutary for the husband or the wife to go before the *Qazi*, and appeal for arbitration to smooth their difficulties, than do any rash act which may cause much unhappiness to both afterwards.

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- (b) "Those who swear that they will not go in to their wives, should wait four months; so if they go back, then Allah is surely Forgiving, Merciful", (ii. 226).

By "going back" is meant the re-establishment of conjugal relations. If, before the expiry of the period mentioned, the husband and wife resume marital relations, then Allah is willing to forgive the faults of either or both.

- (c) "And if they have resolved on a divorce (*Talaqa*), then Allah is surely Hearing, Knowing", (ii. 227).

Muhammad Ali, commenting on the above verse, says :—

"*Talaq* is an infinitive noun from *talaqat*, said of a woman, meaning *she was left free to go her way, or become separated from her husband, and signifies the dissolving of the marriage tie*. . . . Divorce is one of the institutions of Islam regarding which much misconception prevails, so much so that even the Islamic law, as administered in the British Courts in India, is not free from these misconceptions. The chief features of the Islamic law of divorce, as dealt with in the Holy Qur-án, will be noticed under the particular verses dealing with them. Here I may state that the Islamic law has many points of advantage as compared with both the Jewish and Christian laws as formulated in *Deuteronomy* and *Matthew*. The chief feature of improvement is that the wife can claim a divorce according to the Islamic law, neither Moses nor Christ conferring that right on the woman, though it is to be regretted that this very feature is the one that is not recognized in India. And the feature of divorce is that it is elastic and does not strictly limit the cause of divorce. In fact, if the civilized nations of Europe and America, who own the same religion, are at the same stage of advancement, and have an affinity of feeling on most social and moral questions, cannot agree as to the causes of divorce, how could a universal religion like Islam, which was meant for all ages and all countries, for people in the lowest grade of civilization as well as those at the top, limit those causes, which must vary with the varying conditions of humanity and society. . . . It may also be added here that, though divorce is allowed by Islam if sufficient cause exists, yet the right is to be exercised under

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exceptional circumstances. The Qur-án itself approves of the Holy Prophet insisting on Zaid not divorcing his wife, notwithstanding a discussion of a sufficiently long standing (xxxiii. 37). And the Holy Prophet's memorable words '*of all the things which have been permitted to men divorce is the most hated by Allah*' (reported by Abu Dawud), will always act as a strong check on any loose interpretation of the words of the Holy Qur-án. There are cases on record (given by Bukhari) in which he actually pronounced divorce to be illegal", (Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 104).

(d) " And the divorced women should keep themselves in waiting for three courses; and it is not lawful for them that they should conceal what Allah has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allah and the last day; and their husbands have a better right to take them back in the meanwhile if they wish for reconciliation; *and they (women) have rights similar to those against them in a just manner*, and the men are a degree above them (meaning *physically*), and Allah is Mighty, Wise", (ii. 228).

" The period of waiting or *iddat*, forms the *first* condition in the Islamic law of divorce. But for cases in which marriage is not consummated, no period of waiting is necessary (as is clear from xxxiii. 49). The period of waiting is really a period of temporary separation, during which conjugal relations may be re-established. This period of temporary separation serves as a check upon divorce, and it is the *second* point mentioned by the Qur-án. This is the best safeguard against a misuse of divorce, for in this way only such unions would be ended by divorce as really deserve to be ended, being devoid of the faintest spark of love. Thus, while the Islamic law of divorce makes every possible provision for love to assert itself, it requires the dissolution of the marriage when it is proved that mutual love is not possible. The rights of *women* against their husbands are stated to be *similar* to those which the husbands have against their wives. . . . The change in this respect was nearly a revolutionizing one, for the Arabs hitherto regarded women as mere chattels, *and now the women were*

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*given a position equal in all respects to that of men, for they were declared to have rights similar to those which were exercised against them. This declaration brought about a revolution not only in Arabia but in the whole world, for the equality of the rights of women with those of men was never previously recognized by any nation or any reformer ; nay, it is not to this day recognized among the most civilized nations. The woman could no longer be discarded at the will of her ' lord,' but she could either claim equality as a wife or demand divorce. The statement that ' men are a degree above them ' does not nullify the rights asserted in the previous passage, but refers to quite a different aspect of the question which is made clear in iv. 34 " (as explained above). (Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-5, and also Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law*, vol. ii. pp. 529-566.)*

(To be continued.)

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FOUR GREAT RELIGIONS¹

By JAMES A. SPROULE, Tacoma, U.S.A.

If a book comes from the heart,
It will reach other hearts.

CARLYLE on the Koran.

A SERIES of articles entitled "What Can a Man Believe?" by Mr. Bruch Barton, published in the *Tacoma News Tribune* for April 14 and 16, 1928, have evidently been given very little study by the author. He writes of the four great religions and informs us that three of the four contain the principle of the Golden Rule.

"Mohammed, whose doctrine was death to all unbelievers, evidently had no use for such a precept." Again, regarding the future life, "Mohammed was very specific. His heaven was a garden filled with every sensual delight."

Mr. Barton also states: "Thus in the degree and quality

¹ We regret that owing to pressure on our space the article written a few months ago, as the quotations given therein show, could not be printed earlier. But this does not detract in any way from the value of the contribution, because it deals with issues which *pace* the tireless efforts of the Christian priestcraft to misrepresent Islam, do not seem to lose the lustre of their tinsel.—ED. I.R.

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of hope and inspiration which they hold out for the future, the four religions are far apart. And each has fixed upon its people the stamp of its own character. The Chinese neither hoping nor fearing, but patiently enduring; the Buddhist renouncing all active effort as useless; the Mohammedan showing no mercy to his foes, already condemned to eternal punishment, but gladly incurring any risk in exchange for the delights of a fleshly heaven; Christianity teaching that every thought and act has eternal significance, that 'God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap.' "

We believe that if this author had read Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*, or subscribed for a time to the *Islamic Review* published at Woking, England, he would have revised some of the above utterances.

Carlyle, the Scotch mystic, who believed in a spiritual universe, that all men were spirits clothed for a time in a tabernacle of matter called the body, and that all religions were but the efforts of finite man to fathom the infinite, picked his heroes from all creeds. He gave us the pagan divinity Odin, the Catholic poet Dante, Luther the hero of the Reformation, and others. But none of them caused the sensation that his "hero as a prophet" did, this hero being Muhammad.

For twelve long centuries the prophet of Islam had been the butt of all kinds of ridicule and slander. "The lies we tell about this man," says Carlyle, "reflect upon ourselves"; and then he proceeded to tell the world a few plain facts about this Arab teacher, his life and his times. He refuted most of the absurdities then prevalent regarding Islam, its propagation by the sword, its sensual paradise, and the private life of the Prophet.

Since Carlyle's time Islam has grown faster than all Christian sects combined in Africa, India, China, and the South Sea Islands, and lately mosques have been erected at Woking (England), Paris (France), and Berlin (Germany).

The writer in the *Unity of Religions* has pointed out that if the three great religions of the world—Christian, Islam, and Buddhist (Confucianism being at most a philosophy)—cut out the non-essentials, they could unite in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, such inventions as the fall of man,

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virgin birth, and vicarious atonement being discarded by many intelligent Christians now, among them being the Bishop of Birmingham, Dean Inge, and others.

Muhammad, like Jesus, apparently contradicted himself. But these contradictions disappear when we realize the various types of intelligence he had to deal with. For instance, when talking to the wild men of the desert on heaven and hell he had to converse in terms understandable to the Bedouin. But look at the vast difference of language when he conversed with the emissary of the Greek Emperor on the same question : the Prophet then spoke of a heaven which embraced the universe.

“ Why, you have left no place for hell,” said the Christian.

“ When the light shineth, where is the darkness? Glory be to God,” retorted the Prophet, which indicates a belief akin to Universalism.

Again he says Allah (God) is closer than your jugular vein, a statement which recalls Tennyson's *Higher Pantheism* :—

Nearer is He than breathing,
Closer than hands and feet.

The Prophet also pictured heaven as consisting of seven planes, or states of spiritual advancement. Our theosophist and spiritualistic friends are agreed upon this. They expect a world of progress over there.

Muhammad never pretended to work miracles. “ Why ask you for miracles? Look around,” said he. The great clouds, the ships with their black wings were a miracle to this son of the desert, also the cow turning grass into milk. Yet his ideas on the wonders of Nature bear resemblance to what Haeckel said on the same subject in his *Monism*. Modern science has demonstrated that matter like light, heat and electricity is but a form of force.

So far from the Prophet condemning all other religions, his greatest command was “ There must be no compulsion in religion,” and numerous Christian sects enjoyed life and liberty in Muslim lands when we Christians were butchering and burning one another for the glory of God.

When the great Caliph Omar captured Jerusalem he rode into the city, the Christian bishop at his side. He refused to

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hold service in a Christian church lest it should serve to an enthusiastic follower of his as an incentive to turn the church into a mosque.

When the Christians recaptured Jerusalem in 1099 they spared neither sex nor age. The streets of the Holy City ran ankle deep in blood. When the Crescent again, in 1187, waved in triumph, did the conquerors emulate the Christian warriors and butcher old and young? No; although strongly tempted by the example of the Christians, they spared the people. (Note: I never saw a Christian editor who would print the above facts.)

So far from condemning other creeds, the Qur-án contains such injunctions as "There is no compulsion in the matter of religion." "Noblest of you is one who fears God." "For you is your religion and for me is mine." "Do not vilify those whom they call their gods; otherwise they will vilify you through ignorance." "Return mischief with virtue. If you will do so, you will turn your enemy into a friend."

As Carlyle intimates, those who seek an easy religion will not find it in Islam, with prayers five times a day, long fasts with abstinence from pleasures of the flesh. A traveller speaks of a young Arab surrounded by cannibals who drops his weapons and prostrates at the hour of devotion.

It is such things as this which enable a creed without priesthood to grow. The Qur-án teaches that man was born sinless. Each one is judged for his or her own deeds.

Lecky says: "The pantheistic writings which flowed from the school of Averroës reviving the old stoical notions of a soul of nature diverted attention to the great problem of mind and matter. The conception of an all-pervading spirit which sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal, and wakes in man the belief that the hidden vital principle which produces the various forms of organization is but the thrill of the Divine Essence that is present in all." This belief is the key-note of the deep mysticism which pervades Islam and which no other faith has ever remotely preached.

Muhammad is also accused of encouraging polygamy. Like the ancient patriarchs, Abraham and the others, the Arabs had a plurality of wives. The Prophet had but one

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until he reached his fifty-third year. He had as an inheritance one slave, Zeid, whom he freed. Zeid became his third convert, and fell in battle at the first clash with the empire.

The Prophet loves his freed man as a son. He comforted the relatives of the dead warrior with promises of paradise and told them to withdraw from where the body lay. The daughter, returning, found the old grey-haired teacher in an agony of woe.

"What is this I see?" exclaimed the girl.

"You see a man mourning for his friend," said Muhammad.

Anyone who has gone through the "valley of desolation" caused by a recent bereavement can appreciate the Prophet's feelings and how little philosophy or religion can soothe our woes or make up for the touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still. Only God and time can heal wounds of this kind.

The statement of God being not mocked and what a man sows that shall he reap is not confined to Christianity. Buddha insists that every act brings its own recompense. The Power Divine knows no wrath nor pardon.

Utter true its measures mete,
Its faultless balance weighs,
To-morrow it may judge,
Or after many days.

Some of our Christian sects teach that money paid to certain personages will buy pardon for sins even before the sin is committed. Abuse in the sale of these indulgences brought on the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Other Christians believe that if one gets religion he is forgiven.

Islam teaches that we are judged for what we do, not what we believe. In it there is no original-sin story to frighten the race. Premeasurement, and not predestination, is its real key-note.

It was the Muslims, not the monks, who saved civilization during the Dark Ages, according to reliable historians. Muslim laws for women were a thousand years in advance of any Christian land, as stated by Judge Pierre Crabitès in his article "What Mohamet did for Women," published in the *Asia*, New York, for January 1927.

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ON ATTITUDE IN PRAYER

"To God belong the east and the west ; therefore whithersoever ye turn yourself to pray, there is the face of God. It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces in prayer towards the east and the west, but righteousness is of him that believeth in God, who is constant at prayer, and giveth alms, and of those who perform their covenant, and behave patiently in adversity."—THE QUR-ÂN, c. 2.

MY God, where shall I seek Thee,
Where look to find Thy face,
When forth I stand to praise Thee,
Or kneel to ask Thy Grace ?

Say, shall I turn to eastward,
Where dawns each radiant day,
Or lift to Heav'n above me
My rev'rent eyes to pray ?

Or towards the holy mountain,
Where Zion's temple stood,
The home of Hebrew Psalmists,
Of Prophets wise and good ?

Nay, 'tis not suppliant posture
Is righteousness with Thee,
But works of active goodness—
Faith, love, and charity.

No prayer sincerely uttered
Will be by Thee forgot;
No need to ask where art Thou,
For, oh ! where art Thou not ?

O'er all the world's wide surface,
Where'er we turn in prayer—
East, west, north, south, or zenith—
Thy face, O Lord, is there.

By DR. AMHERST D. TYSSSEN, D.C.L., M.A.

Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House
—111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, London—every Friday
at 1 p.m. Sunday Lectures at 3.30 p.m. Qur-ân and Arabic
Classes—every Sunday at 5.30–7 p.m.

Service, Sermon, and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking,
at 3.15 p.m. Every Friday at 1 p.m.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details, please write to the IMÁM of the Mosque, Woking.]

ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e. the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-ÁN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) angels; (3) books from God; (4) messengers from God; (5) the hereafter; (6) the measurement of good and evil; (7) resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state, in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) prayer; (3) fasting; (4) almsgiving; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the

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Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the heaven and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith is of itself insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden, and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS IN ISLAM.—"Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual, and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under like obligations, the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches, and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race, and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.